

“Who Are You?”

John 1:14-34

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Teaching Aim: To explore the significance of the ministry of John the Baptist. To recognize the concern of the religious leaders in Jerusalem at what, in their eyes, appeared to be unauthorized baptisms by John of the Jewish people in the Jordan River. To realize, John’s ministry was preparatory in nature as he prepared the Jewish people for the coming Messiah. To understand Jesus is the *“Agnus Dei,”* the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)

Part I: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14-18)

1. **Verses 1 and 2** describe who *“the Word”* or *“Logos”* is. What incredible truth do we learn from **verse 14**? Who did John in his gospel identify as *“the Word?”* What are some ways that John and the others beheld the glory of Jesus? (See **Matt. 17:1-7; John 20:19-29**)

2. What did John mean in **verse 14** when he said Jesus is *“the only begotten of the Father?”* (See Commentaries) What is the meaning of the word *“grace?”* How do we see both grace and truth at work in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ? (See **John 14:6; Eph. 2:8-9**)

3. Who did the Apostle John present as the first witness in his gospel that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (**vs. 15**)? What message did John the Baptist bring to the Jews in **verse 15**? How could Jesus be born after John, yet still exist before him? (See **John 1:1-3**)

4. Regular human beings only have one nature, but Jesus had two. What are they? What message did John the Baptist bring to the Jewish people? (See **Matt. 3:2**) John’s mission was preparatory in nature; in other words, to prepare the Jewish people for the arrival of the Messiah. What warning did John the Baptist give to the Jewish leaders in **Luke 3:17**? Do you think people are prepared spiritually for the Second Coming of Christ today?

5. We often hear people complain that God is not fair in some of the ways that He deals with us. Do you really want God to be fair to you and give you what is “just” (**vs. 16**)? What makes receiving God’s grace so much better than receiving God’s justice?

6. Moses was the mediator of the Old Covenant; Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the New. What was the purpose of the law? (See **Rom. 3:19-20; Gal. 3:24**) The law kills. What do we receive through Jesus Christ (**vs. 17**)? Jesus did not come to do away with the law but rather to fulfill it. (See **Matt. 5:17**) What do the sacrifices of the Old Testament point to?

7. The first 18 verses of the Gospel of John are known as “*the prologue*” or introduction. **Verse 18** makes the unusual statement that Jesus is, “*the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father.*” Mirriam Webster’s Dictionary defines “*bosom*” as “*the front part of the chest; the seat of the emotions and intimate feelings.*” What can we learn about the unique relationship between God the Father and God the Son from this description?

Part II: Rising concern about John the Baptist and his ministry of baptism (John 1:19-28)

1. John the Baptist is now presented as the first of several witnesses in the Gospel of John to the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (**vs. 19**). Why do you think the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent investigators to find out who John the Baptist was and by what authority he was baptizing? Was this baptism offensive to the Jewish religious leaders? If so, why?

2. Whom did John immediately confess he was not (**vs. 20**)? What is the second question the Jewish religious leaders asked John after he denied being the Christ (**vs. 21**)? Elijah the Prophet never died; he is still alive. (See **2 Kin. 2:11**) Why do you think the religious leaders wondered if John might be Elijah? (See **Matt. 3:4; 2 Kin. 1:8; Mal. 4:5-6**) Notice John’s response gets shorter with each question he is asked: “*I am not the Christ*”; “*I am not*”; “*No.*” Though John was not Elijah, what can we learn about him from **Luke 1:16-17**.

3. The next question John was asked is, “*Are you the Prophet?*” What was John’s response (**vs. 21b**)? Who is “*the Prophet*” and what is the significance of this individual, not only to the Jews, but also to the world? (See **Deut. 18:15, 18**) What are some of the differences between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant? Which covenant would you rather live under? Why?

4. In complete frustration, what did the religious leaders ask John in **verse 22**? Should it surprise us that John the Baptist takes the religious leaders right back to the Hebrew Scriptures for their answer (**vs. 23**)? What was John’s reply? What is the significance of the illustration used by John in **Isa. 40:3**? In reality, what was John telling the Jewish people?

5. **Verse 24** identified the Pharisees as the ones questioning John the Baptist. What do we know about the Pharisees today? (See Bible Dictionary) Although the Pharisees were meticulous in following the law, they received greater rebuke than any other people group from the lips of Jesus; nearly an entire chapter in Matthew. (See **Matt. 23:1-36**) Why?

6. According to **verse 25**, what issue did the Pharisees challenge John on? What, if any, difference was there between Jewish proselyte baptism and John’s baptism? Why were the religious leaders insulted by John’s baptism?

7. John didn’t take the bait from the Pharisees; he deflected their attention back to the coming Christ (**vs. 26**). According to John, how great was the One who was to come after him (**vs. 27**)? Taking the sandals off of the feet of a master was the role of a common slave. How did John view himself in comparison to Christ?

8. There are two Bethany’s mentioned in the Bible. This Bethany is not the village two miles from Jerusalem where Mary, Martha & Lazarus lived. This Bethany was also called “*Bethabara*” (**vs. 28**). Where was this town located? Have you ever been baptized in the Jordan River? Why do you think so many Christians choose to be baptized there?

Part III: Introduction of the Lamb of God and His unique ministry (John 1:29-34)

1. The next day John saw someone approaching (**vs. 29**). How did he identify this person? Why did John call Jesus "*the Lamb of God*" and what is the significance of this title? (See **Exo. 12:21b-23**) Is there any other way for a sinner to be saved than to find refuge under the blood of the Lamb? Where was this Passover Lamb ultimately slain? What is the significance of **2 Cor. 5:21** and why is this verse so important to our salvation?
2. In **verse 30**, John the Baptist referred back to his earlier statement in **verse 15**. John had a way of deflecting attention off of himself and back onto Christ. According to **Luke 1:34-36**, Mary and Elizabeth were related. How could John not know Jesus (**vs. 31**)? (See Commentaries) Is it possible the two had not seen each other for years and John didn't recognize Jesus physically? Have you ever seen a friend that you did not recognize? Many scholars speculate that John didn't realize that his cousin Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. Why does **Matthew 3:13-15** seem to refute this belief?
3. What sign from God verified to John that Jesus was in fact the Messiah (**vs. 32**)? (See **Matt. 3:16-17**) What additional assurance did John receive from God?
4. According to **verse 33**, what special kind of baptizing would Jesus do? Make a list of what happens to a believer once they are baptized by the Holy Spirit? How has your life changed since regeneration (or being born-again)?
5. Who do you think the greatest prophet under the Old Covenant was? Abraham? Moses? Elijah? Elisha? David? Who did Jesus think the greatest prophet was (**vs. 34**)? (See **Matt. 11:11-14**)

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- It is remarkable that Jesus left His glory in heaven to save sinful people like us.
- The law was given through Moses; grace and truth are found in Jesus Christ.
- While we only have one nature, Jesus has two; He is fully God and fully Man.
- The ministry of John the Baptist was preparatory in nature, John prepared the Jewish people for the coming of Messiah.
- Though popular among the common people, John humbly deflected the attention off of himself and back onto the coming Messiah; we should do the same today.
- Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
- John physically baptized with water; Jesus spiritually baptizes with the Holy Spirit.
- John the Baptist was the first witness in John's gospel to testify that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.